

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 NEA-10

EUR-12 SAJ-01 (ISO) W

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R 251740Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3300

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 1699

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR,GY

SUBJECT: GOG SOFTENS CRITICISM OF U.S.

REF: (A) GEORGETOWN 1390, (B) GEORGETOWN 1537

SUMMARY: WE HAVE NOTED THAT REFERENCES TO DESTABILIZATION IN GOG PRESS REMAIN VAGUE AND ARE BECOMING LESS FREQUENT, WITH RECENT MENTION OF IT PRIMARILY CONFINED TO MEDIA REPORTS FROM COLOMBO. THIS WEEK THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE ORDERED SPECIFIC CRITICAL REFERENCES TO THE U.S. TO BE OMITTED FROM A SOVIET JOURNALIST'S ARTICLE ON DESTABILIZATION BEFORE IT WAS PUBLISHED. BURNHAM APPEARS TO HAVE REALIZED THAT HE WENT TOO FAR IN CRITICIZING THE U.S. EARLIER THIS YEAR. END SUMMARY.

1. LOCAL ALLEGATIONS OF "DESTABILIZATION" HAVE BECOME LESS FREQUENT AND MORE VAGUE IN RECENT WEEKS. REFERENCES TO DESTABILIZATION APPEARING IN LOCAL MEDIA RECENTLY HAVE BEEN DERIVED PRIMARILY FROM REPORTS OF PROCEEDINGS AT NASC IN COLOMBO. THE UNITED STATES IS NOT MENTIONED SPECIFICALLY IN REFERENCE TO DESTABILIZATION; THE LESS POINTED TERM "IMPERIALISTS", HOWEVER, IS IN CURRENT FAVOR.

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2. AN ILLUSTRATION OF HOW THE GOG IS HANDLING THE ISSUE OCCURRED THIS WEEK WHEN A LOCAL CORRESPONDENT TOOK AN ARTICLE WRITTEN ON DESTABILIZATION BY SOVIET CORRESPONDENT, ANATOLY ATROSHENKO, TO THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE, SHIRLEY FIELD-RIDLEY, FOR CLEARANCE AND WAS INSTRUCTED BY THE MINISTER TO DELETE SPECIFIC UNFAVORABLE REFERENCES TO THE UNITED STATES (AND THE ONLY MENTION OF BRITAIN). THE THRUST OF THE ARTICLE ORIGINALLY WAS TO CHARGE THE UNITED STATES WITH ORIGINATING THE "DESTABILIZATION" CAMPAIGN AGAINST GUYANA AND JAMAICA. IN ORDERING THE DIRECT REFERENCES TO THE U.S. DELETED, FIELD-RIDLEY REPORTEDLY COMMENTED: "WE DONT WANT TO ANTAGONIZE THE AMERICANS MORE THAN HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE". THE EDITED ARTICLE (ORIGINAL TEXT OF WHICH WE HAVE COMPARED WITH PUBLISHED VERSION) THUS WAS SOFTER IN TONE AND THE VAGUE.

3. COMMENT: APPARENTLY, THE WORD HAS BEEN PASSED TO "GO EASY" ON THE UNITED STATES. WE NOTE THAT FONMIN WILLS, PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE TO SRI LANKA, TOLD US THAT GUYANA'S PAPER ON DESTABILIZATION WOULD NOT MENTION THE UNITED STATES BY NAME (REF B), AND FROM MEDIA COVERAGE HERE WE GATHER THAT GUYANA'S DELEGATION MADE NO DIRECT ATTACKS ON U.S. (TEXT OF BURNHAM'S SPEECH IN SRI LANKA HAS NOT BEEN PUBLISHED). THE PRECISE REASONS BEHIND THE SOFTENING OF DESTABILIZATION CHARGES REMAIN UNCLEAR, BUT I SUSPECT BURNHAM MAY HAVE DECIDED THAT HE HAD GONE TOO FAR WITH THE CAMPAIGN AND HAD OVERLY ALIENATED THE UNITED STATES. SECONDLY, A DEGREE OF GUYANESE DISENCHANTMENT WITH THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS ALSO MAY HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT.

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